

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A device for use in an interactive cable television system, the device
2 comprising:
 - 3 a hardware peripheral device coupled to a computer modem at a user
4 premises and in communication with a computer network, for
5 communicating data from a user via the computer network to a cable
6 television network head end to control a television information signal
7 provided over a cable television network cable connected directly to a
8 digital cable ready television at the user premises.
- 1 2. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device is integrated into
2 a single unit with the computer modem.
- 1 3. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device is a separate unit
2 from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.
- 1 4. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared
2 (IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the
3 television information signal.
- 1 5. A device according to claim 1, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio
2 frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and
3 controlling the television information signal.
- 1 6. A device according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.

1 7. A method for cable television system communication, the method comprising:
2 controlling a television information signal provided by a cable television
3 network cable connected directly to a digital cable ready television at a
4 user premises based on data communicated by a user to a peripheral
5 device coupled to a computer modem at the user premises and in
6 communication with a computer network, via the computer network to
7 a cable television network head end.

1 8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the peripheral device is integrated
2 into a single unit with the computer modem.

1 9. A method according to claim 7, wherein the peripheral device is a separate
2 unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.

1 10. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
2 controlling the television information signal using an infrared (IF) link
3 from the peripheral device.

1 11. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
2 controlling the television information signal using a radio frequency (RF)
3 link from the peripheral device.

1 12. A method according to claim 7, further comprising:
2 showing a current status of the peripheral device on a status indicator.

1 13. An interactive cable television system comprising:
2 a computer network;

3 a computer modem at a user premises in communication with the computer
4 network;
5 a cable television network including a head end for providing a television
6 information signal over a cable television network cable directly to a
7 digital cable ready television at the user premises, the television having
8 a display responsive to the television information signal;
9 a hardware peripheral device coupled to the modem for communicating data
10 from a user via the computer network to the head end to control the
11 television information signal.

1 14. A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device is integrated
2 into a single unit with the computer modem.

1 15. A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device is a separate
2 unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.

1 16. A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared
2 (IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the
3 television information signal.

1 17. A system according to claim 13, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio
2 frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and
3 controlling the television information signal.

1 18. A system according to claim 13, further comprising:
2 a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.

1 19. A device for use in an interactive cable television system, the device

2 comprising:

3 a hardware peripheral device having:

4 i. a receiver for receiving data from a user input device,
5 ii. a processor responsive to the data for sending communications
6 through a computer modem at a user premises over a computer
7 network to a cable television network head end, and
8 iii. an output for controlling a television information signal:

9 (a) provided by a cable television network cable connected
10 directly to a digital cable ready television at the user premises,
11 (b) from the head end responsive to the communications from
12 the hardware peripheral device.

1 20. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device is integrated
2 into a single unit with the computer modem.

1 21. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device is a separate
2 unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer
3 modem.

1 22. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared
2 (IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the
3 television.

1 23. A device according to claim 19, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio
2 frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and
3 controlling the television.

1 24. A device according to claim 19, further comprising:
2 a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.

- 1 **25. An interactive cable television system comprising:**
 - 2 a computer modem at a user premises and in communication with a
 - 3 computer network;
 - 4 a user input device;
 - 5 a hardware peripheral device having:
 - 6 i. a receiver for receiving data from the user input device, and
 - 7 ii. a processor responsive to the data for sending communications
 - 8 through the computer modem to a cable head end; and
 - 9 a digital cable ready television at the user premises and directly connected
 - 10 to a cable television network cable for displaying a television information signal
 - 11 provided over the cable from the head end controlled by the communications
 - 12 from the hardware peripheral device.
- 1 **26. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device is integrated**
2 **into a single unit with the computer modem.**
- 1 **27. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device is a separate**
2 **unit from the computer modem and connected to an input port on the computer**
3 **modem.**
- 1 **28. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device uses an infrared**
2 **(IF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and controlling the**
3 **television information signal.**
- 1 **29. A system according to claim 25, wherein the peripheral device uses a radio**
2 **frequency (RF) link for at least one of receiving the data from the user and**
3 **controlling the television information signal.**

- 1 **30. A system according to claim 25, further comprising:**
- 2 **a status indicator section showing a current status of the peripheral device.**